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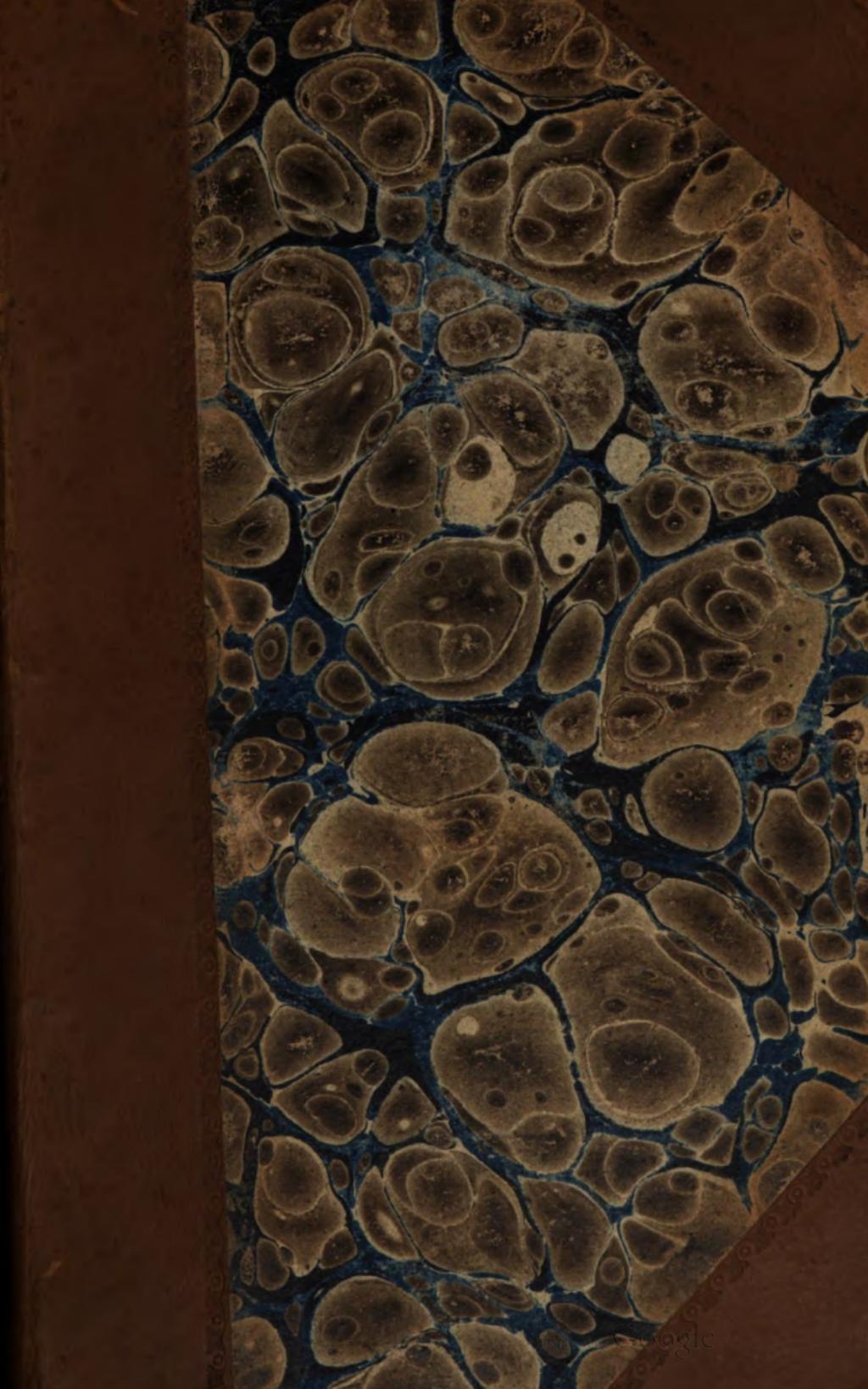
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THE
VILLAGE POOR-HOUSE.

BY

THE REV. JAMES WHITE,

LATE CURATE OF HARTEST CUM BOXTED, SUFFOLK.



Let not Ambition mock their useful toil,
—— their destinies obscure,
Nor Grandeur hear, with a disdainful smile,
The short and simple annals of the Poor.

SECOND EDITION.

LONDON:
SMITH, ELDER, AND CO., CORNHILL.

1832.

319.

LONDON :
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DEDICATION.

THE following attempt to illustrate the state
of feeling amidst the Pauper Population, is
respectfully dedicated to **LORD BROUGHAM**,
First in Talents—First in Honour—and First
in the Hearts of his Countrymen.

14th May, 1832.

P R E F A C E

TO THE SECOND EDITION.

THE favourable notice which the Press has taken of this little volume, is to be attributed, I am well aware, to the object it has in view, rather than to the merits of the composition. The demand for a "Second Edition," in so short a time, proves that the state of the Poor in the Rural Districts, has awakened more sympathy than I was sanguine enough to hope. Enquiry into their sufferings is certain to lead to their amelioration. I have been accused by a small portion of the Press, of endeavouring to stir up bad passions, and to excite the dis-

content of the Poor, without procuring them any benefit. The book, it will be seen, is not addressed to the Poor;—it merely contains an exposition of what, from personal communication with many of them, I know to be their feelings;—they are immoral, vicious, and discontented—and, it need not be stated after that, that they are ignorant. I feel no “stings of conscience” in making these declarations, whether in verse or prose—and if they are made “without procuring the Poor any benefit,” I have only to say, it is not my fault—and certainly not my intention.

INTRODUCTION.

TO — — —, ESQ.

MY DEAR — — —,

I NEED not assure you that the Village described in the following lines, is a fictitious one, and that the characters introduced in them are imaginary. Five years' experience, as a Country Curate, has taught me many painful lessons and many bitter truths. It has shewn me a degraded and benighted peasantry, and convinced me that all the descriptions of country life, which we admire in the poets, are *only* poetical. "God made the country, and man made the town." Alas! God made both, and man defaces both. But when we turn from the representations of rural life to its reality, we are startled to find the virtues as much banished

from the groves, as from the crowded alley; and, I grieve to say it, a stronger line drawn between the extremes of society—or, at least, a wider gap between its connecting links, than even in great cities. Was the rural population once happy and contented, as we find them described in books? or was it the surface only that presented this appearance, while misery and discontent lurked unseen below? Men are becoming progressively enlightened, and acquire a power of feeling their miseries, and of expressing them. My neighbours here—charitable, kind hearted, and benevolent on all other subjects—have an apathy about the sufferings of the poor which surprises me. They tell me that, thirty years ago, when all the articles of consumption were dearer, their wages were less,—and still that there were no complaints while the Tories were in power. I am not old enough to know whether this be true or not, from my own observation; but if it be true that their misery was greater and their complaints unuttered, I can only hail it as a “*specimen melioris ævi*,” that the poor are beginning to have their claims advocated and their sufferings attended to. The anathemas of my friends are hurled with especial vengeance on education, and the Whigs as the causes of popular discontent.

It is difficult to enter into the feelings which can prompt any one to bring forward education as an article of impeachment. I had thought, since the days of Dogberry, that a slight knowledge of verbs and nouns had ceased to be a crime. But it appears to them that the power of reading is confined, in the case of the poor, only to the most dangerous publications,—that treason, blasphemy, and insubordination are within their reach; but that their understandings are darkened the moment they turn to works inculcating order, and regularity, and religion. The man, they say, who can read his Bible, can read Carpenter and Cobbett. Why not reverse the proposition, and say, the man who can read Carpenter and Cobbett, can read his Bible? If we are not to do evil that good may follow, still less are we to abstain from doing good for fear of the consequences. What right have we to bar a poor man from the Word of God, merely because, at the same time, it gives him the power of reading a political pamphlet. Learning is the tree of knowledge of good and evil,—but, in this case, there is no penalty attached to eating of the fruit. It is commanded to all men to search the Scriptures—to all men is appointed one way to a life of happiness, and

I cannot conceive what right we have (not to speak it profanely) to incapacitate him from reading the direction-posts upon the road.

The spread of education is the surest enemy of the Atheist and the Demagogue. Give men the power to read, and you give them also the power to reason. Give them the power to reason,—man's nature is not so totally corrupt, as knowingly to forsake the good and cleave to the evil. Education will certainly be universal at last. It would be good policy to direct into proper channels that which cannot be repressed. Distributed equally, and with skill, it will irrigate and beautify the whole “field of man;”—but, dammed up, until accumulation gives it irresistible force, it will burst the boundaries which have been vainly set up against its progress, and overwhelm every thing in irremediable confusion.

With regard to the following verses, if they attract any attention to the actual present state of feeling amongst the poor, I shall be quite satisfied. As to the *poetry* of the performance, the less said the better;—poetry is too high a word to be applied to any composition of mine.

I remain, &c.

THE

VILLAGE POOR-HOUSE.

I.

Our village has a pleasant look,
A happy look as e'er was seen—
Right through the valley flows a brook
Which winds in many a flow'ry nook
And freshens all the green.
On either side, so clean and white,
A row of cottages you see—
And jessamine is clustered o'er
The humble trellise of each door,
Then left to clamber free
And shake its blossoms far and wide
O'er all the white-wash'd cottage' side.
As dying evening sinks away
The old church tow'r, erect and grey,

Catches far up the parting light,
 And half grows holy to the sight.
 In truth, it has a reverend grace,
 As if it were some sacred place,
 Calm, silent, shaded, and serene,
 Some blessed spot where God has been.
 Here might the pensive sinner creep
 To mourn his wicked courses ;
 Here, o'er his “ youth's fond errors ” weep—
 What matter though the Rector keep
 His carriage and four horses ?
 Weep on ! thou man of sin and tears !—
 But trouble not the Rector's ears.

The Rectory stands all aloof
 And rears its proudly slated roof
 In middle of a stately park,
 (Five acres and a perch.)
 The porter's lodge, where lives the clerk,
 Gives entrance by an iron gate
 Wide-opened upon days of state,
 When my lady drives from church ;
 For my lady's knees are so stiff with kneeling,
 And her nerves so strain'd with devotional feeling,
 That she sends for the carriage and takes a drive,
 And comes home to dinner at half-past five.

II.

That house on t'other side the green,
 So proud of its verandah screen
 That it almost seems to sneer
 (If its stone-and-mortar looks you watch)
 On the clay-built walls and roof of thatch
 Of its humble neighbours near;—
 That house the Attorney calls his own,
 And he colour'd it all like the best Bath stone,
 And raised two pillars of—painted wood,
 And on either side of his door they stood,
 And he gravell'd a stately drive in front,
 And built a high wall with rails upon 't,
 For he could not endure that his windows should lie
 Exposed to every vulgar eye—
 The principal gate is always barr'd,
 But a door leads through the stable-yard,—
 And see!—just over the wall, you can get
 A view of the roof of his barouchette,
 Blazon'd and gilt for his lady's rides;
 And he keeps a green gig for himself besides—
 A thriving village—fair to see—
 Admired by each new comer,

And leaves are out on every tree,
 The birds sing loud, the birds fly free,—
 'Tis now the height of summer.
 Oh, blessed God! who o'er the earth,
 The air, the sea, hast scatter'd mirth,
 The blessed mirth that cheers the heart
 When happiness and joy must rise
 From every sight that charms the eyes—
 How good, how bountiful thou art!
 Oh, what has man to think of more
 Than bless thy goodness, and adore ?

III.

Within yon paper-window'd room,
 A group in sadness and in gloom
 Is sitting,—and, though no one speaks,
 Look only on their eyes and cheeks !
 It needs not language to express
 Their tale of misery and distress ;—
 The Village Poor-heuse—paupers, they—
 Men—yeung, and sinewy, and strong,
 Condemn'd to see, day after day,
 Their moments creep along

In sloth—for they have nought to do,
 And—start ye not—in *hunger*, too !
 Yes ! hunger, gnawing like a worm,
 Yet armed with more than reptile fangs,
 Wearing away the manly form,
 While scarce tobacco soothes its pangs.*
 And women—young,—they might be fair,
 Save that the blackness of despair
 Is shed o'er every feature there,—
 And gives to lips that might have smil'd
 A curl of desperation wild,
 To eyes that might have beamed,—a look
 Which virtue cannot wear nor brook !
 Such are they in that chamber dim,
 Silent, and desolate, and grim.

There's a wit at the Parson's board to-day,
 How fast he speaks, and the party how gay !
 The gentlemen roar—at a college joke,
 The ladies blush—at an equivoque—

* Few people would grudge the pauper his pipe of tobacco, if they knew that it, in a great measure, supplied to him the place of food.

And ever as livelier leaps the Champaign,
 Still merrier grows the jester's strain,
 Ha ! ha !—how his puns would fall flat and dead
 If his auditors' souls were faint for bread ;
 How shudderingly from his quips they 'd start
 If hunger and thirst were gnawing the heart !

Music !—a lady's jewell'd finger
 Fondly seems to love to linger
 O'er the harp's enamour'd string
 E'er she opes her lips to sing
 Roses—posies—bliss, and kiss.
 Every hand is raised in praise
 Of the sentimental lays,
 And tears, aye, tears,—are seen to pour
 O'er the mock miseries of Moore !

IV.

Back ! into yon room again,
 Weep ye o'er a worthier strain,
 Free from all the gloss of art,
 Echo of a breaking heart !
 Will. Somers rear'd his stately height :
 His eye was glazed, his lip was white,

And o'er his pallid cheek there came
 A flush—it might be rage, or shame,—
 But little needs he blush to own
 Every deed his hands have done,—
 Never was a tenderer son.
 He is free from crime to night,
 Wait ye till to-morrow's light—
 Scowling from the bench he sprung—
 Thus it was Will. Somers sung.

WILL. SOMERS'S SONG.

My mother, she was frail and old,
 And I her only child;
 Our home was desolate and cold,
 And vainly still I toil'd :
 They taxed my strength, I gave it free ;
 And what was all they gave to me ?

2.

A pittance that would scarce find food ;
 And even in Winter's snow
 Was any left to purchase wood,
 To warm my mother?—no !

**Cold, weary, weak, and wanting bread,
I thank'd my God when she was dead.**

3.

**I cannot fawn as others do,
I cannot feign a tear,
I hate the flinty-hearted crew,
The soul-less Overseer,—
They grudge, they grumble, they enjoin ;—
I curse them as I take their coin !**

4.

**Their coin ! Great God of Heaven ! 'tis ours ;
They stamp it in our sweat ;
They task us till our failing powers
Make young men old, and yet,
When at their niggard boards I've stood,
They've grudged to me the price of blood.**

5.

**I've tried in stubborn pride to steel
My heart 'gainst their controul,
But now they've chafed me, and I feel
The tiger in my soul :**

Back, back a hundred-fold they'll pay
 The years of mine they've made their prey !

6.

The 'Squire has covers many a one,
 I know the pheasants' haunt,
 None who has courage and a gun
 Need fear the pangs of want.—
 Huzza ! 'tis hunger claims her right,
 The covers shall be thian'd to night.

V.

Our village is a lovely spot,
 And once, at even-tide,
 A little rising mound I sought
 And soften'd into pleasing thought,
 As, looking far and wide,
 I feasted my admiring sight
 On scenes of beauty and delight.
 A little copse sent up to heav'n
 A breath from hidden wildflowers giv'n,
 And village children wander'd there
 To gather posies for their hair.

“ Here, little maid,—you’re nine years old,
 Your glance is beautiful and bold,
 (For innocence should wear an eye
 In which no bashful terrors lie,) .
 I’ve watch’d you now for many an hour
 Plucking each little blue-eyed flow’r,
 And seen you trim your simple cap
 With daisies from your burthen’d lap,
 You love the flowers;”

The Child replied—

“ Oh! many a day has mother cried;
 For, ever since my sister died,
 They’ve ta’en a shilling’s weekly pay,
 Dear Sally’s burial to defray.
 Since eight this morn we’ve had no food,
 So I’ve come up to Wanstrom’s wood,
 For I think my hunger I forget
 When I gaze upon this violet.”

VI.

Our village has so gay a look
 It seems a consecrated nook
 To happiness and rural mirth,
 So richly glows the fruitful earth.

Volumes of smoke coil high in air
In this calm evening, scarcely stirr'd
By the light breeze, and every where
Carols the blithesome bird,
Which all day long, elate and free,
Has hopt and fed from stack to tree.
And the Farmer's work is over and done,
And merrily now, as sinks the sun,
He quaffs the brown ale 'till his heart grows kind,
And he sups as if he had never dined ;
And a village pauper comes creeping up
Who envies his mutton and envies his cup,
And the Farmer hears his complaint with a frown,
And looses the mastiff to tear him down.
This farmer is a yeoman bold
Of the right *modern* English mould ;
To Rector and 'Squire, with countenance sad,
He says tithes are heavy and times are bad.
The Rector and 'Squire at his tale relent,
And take off from the tithes and diminish the rent.
Ho ! ho ! shouts the farmer, and jingles his purse,
The tithes might be higher, the times might be
worse,

But the Rector and 'Squire are a couple of sages.—
 I'll take sixpence a week from my workmen's wages,
 For the indolent rogues are much overfed—
 And I'll buy little Jane a piano instead.

Our village it is sweet to see
 For God has given it mount and lea,
 And scattered fruits and flowers around,
 As if it were all Eden-ground.—
 Our God, indeed, the spot has blest,
 And man has made it—all the rest.

VII.

Doggedly forth Will Somers is gone,
 And again is another strain begun.
 The singer seems a moody man,
 With withered features, pale and wan,
 An iron brow, unflinching eye,
 From which such fitful glances fly
 As shew a spirit, hardened all,
 And dead to shame or virtue's call;
 And still in every feature drear
 Lurks bitterly a scornful sneer.

JACK MORLEY'S SONG.

1.

I've known the time, or heard it told,
 When bald and feeble men were old :
 Now comes to light the fatal truth,
 We're bald and feeble in our youth.

2.

'Tis not my locks of curly jet,
 'Tis not my strength that I regret,—
 For these, for all, I ne'er repine—
 A curse of deadlier weight is mine.

3.

In youth, in blessed youth, I've knelt
 In the calm hamlet where I dwelt,
 And heard the pious priest declare
 My precious soul was all his care.

4.

Precious, indeed ! One day in seven
 He told us of the joys of heaven ;
 The other six, that man of worth
 Ne'er told us of the joys of earth.

5.

But youth's strong heart can suffer still;
 Pain would be mercy, could it kill.
 The sluggish carcase yet breathes on,
 When what should be it's life is gone.

6.

Bessy;—you saw her 'ere she died,
 And half methinks that ye deride,
 As praises gush from heart and tongue
 Of Bess, when she and I were young.

7.

But changed, indeed, and sin and tears
 On Bessy did the work of years.
 Ah! trust me, in our courting day
 Was never maid so fair and gay.

8.

We loved; and, spite of overseer,
 And priest's and warden's frown severe,
 Spite of long work, and famish'd rest,
 We loved each other and were blest.

9.

We wished to wed ; no home had we,
 And ill could spare the parson's fee—
 He quite forgot “my precious soul,”
 To tempt me thus above controul.

10.

Well ;—but the simple truth I'll speak ;
 Methinks the hot blood fires my cheek
 That tale of agony to tell ;—
 We were young,—lovers,—and we fell.

11.

They soon found out my Bessy's shame,
 They call'd her—what I need not name,
 And jeer'd and laugh'd,—those hearts of stone—
 What hell their mockery shall atone ?

12.

And me !—they took me from her side,—
 They would not let me claim my bride.—
 In dungeon dark they prison'd me,
 And from that hour my soul was free—

13.

Free from the lessons drones had given,
 Stall-fed on earth, to preach of heaven ;
 Life, hope, and heaven alike o'er-cast,
 The future desolate as the past.

14.

And when I left that dismal place
 The felon's mark was on my face,
 The felon's rage was in my blood,
 And madness mingled with my mood.

15.

I found her—Oh, the maddening thought !
 The anguish that one year had wrought
 Some juggling fiend had play'd his part,
 And hell was in my Bessy's heart.

16.

We lived together—evil eyed,
 I scowled on my un-wedded bride ;—
 That maid—ah ! once how kind and free,
 Poured every burning curse on me.

17.

A felon I,—for people cast
 Scowls on the jail-bird as I pass'd ;
 Trampled, and barr'd from virtue's pale,
 I half regretted e'en the jail.

18.

The change that anguish and disgrace
 Wrought in my Bessy's mind and face !
 Step after step each virtue fled,
 Till she was—every thing they said.

19.

I curse them—not that they in sooth
 Have worn in want and toil my youth ;—
 My curses on their heads I roll
 Because they 've brutalized my soul.

VIII.

'Tis sweet, on such a balmy morn,
 To hear the village church bells borne
 Merrily swinging o'er mount and vale,—
 I'll lay you any wager
 'Tis a wedding ! Done ! dene ! for a flaggon of ale !
 Aye,—there goes the triple Bob-Major,

Jingling merrily far and near,
And enlivening all the people.

Three crows disturb'd, spread out their black wings,
On which the bright sunshine a glory flings,
And ever as gaily the wedding peel rings,
They hover around the steeple
Ca ! ca ! high up in the middle air ;
I marvel, if that be a curse or a prayer.

Well, I declare ! 'tis a beautiful sight—
Six pretty maidens dress'd trimly in white,
And see, all stiffen'd with velvet and silk,
The Bride, in a bonnet as spotless as milk.
Louder and louder, the bells ring out,
And a crowd has collected all round about,
And off in four gigs sweeps the cavalcade,—
The Butler has wedded the Lady's-Maid.

The Butler has two score and ten pounds a year,
The key of the cellar and cock of the beer,
A hard-working man you may solemnly swear,
For he stands every day at his master's chair,
And, after such labour, how hard is his fate,
He must lock up the bottles and count the plate ;

Ah ! truth to say, he's the worst used of men,
 His pounds should be double of two score and ten.

The Lady's-Maid ! *she's* to be pitied too,
 She has twenty pounds, and so much to do,
 To curl up her mistress's hair night and morning—
 It leaves *so* little time for her own adorning ;—
 And just when dear Jenkins is saying sweet things,
 To be off in the midst, if her lady's bell rings—
 In short, she's surrounded with toils and woes,
 And wears all her mistress's cast-off clothes.

Besides tinging her cheek with rouges and plaster,
 And listening nonsensical tales from her master ;—
 With labour and cares her position abounds,
 And all for a trifle of twenty pounds !
 Rumour asserts, but then Rumour's a liar,
 That the Butler's first-born will resemble the Squire.
 Come ! let us off to the sign of the Flail,
 You've fairly lost me a flaggon of ale.

PART SECOND.

DRINKING, they say, 's a promoter of quarrels.
 Tush ! 'tis the best of all teachers of morals.
 In a tankard like this, I forget all my wrath,
 And puff malice and hatred away with the froth.

Faith, Hope, and Charitie—
 Those blessed sisters three,
 Sent to sustain, to soothe, and cheer the mind ;
 Oh ! how this life would fleet
 In worship at their feet !
 But man has severed what his God had join'd.

Faith leaves off heavenly things,
 To trust in Lords and Kings,
 Hope shakes her pinions and prepares to roam,
 Best of the sisters three
 Thrice blessed Charity,—
 Ah ! Charity begins—and stays—at home.

Drinking, you see, is productive of piety,
I can't say so much for the Temp'rance Society.

What man is this on coal black steed,
That bumps upon his saddle,
Looking immensely grand indeed,
Like Potentate astraddle?

Erect and prim, to left or right,
He never deigns to turn his sight,
Gramercy, who is that?
A pompous ass I guess is he,
Spite of his shovel hat.

Egad, it makes one laugh to see
The vast imposing dignity
With which, upon unflinching rump,
He bears each dislocating bump,—
He's surely bound on mission great,
To counsel on affairs of State.

Right, right; although guesses are always brittle,
You've hit on the Doctor for once, to a tittle;
Pompous and vain, and woefully weak,
'Twould quite overpower you, to hear him speak,

So loud and so long, and so choice his expressions,
 No wonder he 's Chairman of Quarter Sessions !
 Lord ! how he thunders—a parson can't swear—
 If a poor man's suspected of shooting a hare !
 And as to a bastard !—in horror he 's sunk,
 For the Doctor himself is as chaste as—a monk.
 Yet the Doctor's young Cook is not fam'd for her cooking,
 But the neighbourhood hints she is very good looking.
 Stately and solemn he slowly trots down,
 You would swear he was master of all our poor town ;
 But, see ! as he passes the Poor-House door,
 His horse makes a start, and near topples him o'er,
 It seems so strange to a Magistrate's steed
 That a pauper should sing, that he 's startled indeed ;
 And the clerical Justice has some thoughts of bringing
 An action against the low wretches for singing ;
 Impertinent dogs, as he ambles along,
 To frighten a Magistrate's horse with a song !

MARTHA GREEN'S SONG.

1.

I had a dream of yesternight, it was a blessed dream,
 Methought I saw a fair young child, a cottage, and a
 stream,

A fair young child beside the stream, a cottage clean
and white ;
Methought my heart leapt up, to see so beautiful a sight.

2.

And soon from forth the cottage came, with many a
merry noise,
A playful group of children fair, of happy girls and boys,
Four fair-hair'd boys, four blue-eyed maids,—my heart
leapt up to see,
A careful mother watching them beneath a spreading
tree.

3.

I look'd and look'd, and as I gazed on each fair boy and
girl,
My bosom heav'd with many thoughts, my mind was
in a whirl,
Oh, God ! the truth flash'd forth at once, the dream
was as a sign,—
I was that mother 'neath the tree, those little ones
were mine !

4.

Eight girls and boys were there, I ween,—where are the
darlings now ?

I miss each eye that beam'd with love, I miss each
placid brow ;

Hard times came on; we left that cot, we left that
river clear.

Ah ! little did I ween, in youth, that age would find
me here !

5.

They took my children one by one,—and ground them
to the dust,

They gave them threats instead of thanks, their curses,
and a crust.

Marvel ye that my eldest boy, my gallant William, tore
Their chains, and, with his sword in hand, expired on
foreign shore ?—

6.

My George died soon, but, e'er he died, he whispered
in my ear

Words, fearful words, for one so young—and Death so
very near ;

Death might have heard him as he spoke, for, ere the
curse was done,

His grisly hand was on his heart,—I now had only one.

My stately James, my pensive boy, so thoughtful and
sedate,

What fault is their's who stung thy soul and spurn'd
thee into hate !

All, all at once, his nature chang'd—a man of savage
mood,

A ravening savage,—demon-sold—despairingly he stood.

What was his crime they never told, yet afterwards I
heard,

He spread a net, and caught in it some curious kind
of bird,

Some silly bird,—they took my James and bound him
as he slept,

No word he spoke, but scowl'd severe, and scorn'd me
as I wept.

Years past. My daughters sank in shame—they never
sought my face.

'Tis well. Tho' I am poor, I own no kindred with
disgrace.

My joyous girls—deceived and lost—they fear'd me
 ; and they fled;
 And now I know not where they are; or if alive or dead.

10.

I saw my James, my gallant James;—one night, when
 all alone,
 I shiver'd at the fireless hearth, and made to God my
 moan,
 A man rush'd in, all spent with haste, with wild and
 blood-shot eye,
 “Mother, I come to see you once,—once more, before
 I die.

11.

“Nay, doubt me not, I'm your's indeed, your James in
 very truth,
 “Not the same silent, soul-less James you knew me in
 my youth,—
 “A man—though they have trampled me, and stamp'd
 with felon brand;
 “A man—for I've had vengeance now! there's murder
 on my hand.”

12.

Oh, God! oh, God! my cup was full. His wild and
haggard air

Appall'd me, as, with scornful lip, he told his story there.

“ You know me not, you own me not,—say, mother, is
it so?

“ ‘Tis right. The mother spurns her son. On let the
murderer go?

13.

“ Hark, they are coming! Let them come: they need
not fear my strife,

“ I would not lift a finger now, to save my forfeit life.

“ Here, with my hands across my breast,—and at my
mother's side,

“ They'll take me;—since you own me not, their
fetters I'll abide.

14.

“ Fly! fly!” in madness I began—but to that cham-
ber dim

Three burly men rush'd in. My James ne'er mov'd, or
hand or limb.

They chain'd his arms, and silent there their scowling
 captive stood ;
 But still with fearful eyes they watch'd the wakening
 of his mood.

15.

“ Mother !”—was all he said at last, in voice subdu'd
 and low,
 “ Mother ! you'll surely not refuse to bless me e'er I go.”
 A loud, loud laugh broke out on this, that jarr'd upon
 mine ear,
 And skulking stood behind the door, the listening
 Overseer.

16.

The flame was in my James's cheek, a flush, then pale
 as death,
 I saw the heaving of his breast, the struggling of his
 breath,
 “ Villain ! ” he cried,—and dash'd to earth the guar-
 dians of the door,
 A flash,—a shot,—a sudden groan :—I recollect no more.

17.

When thought came back, I look'd again, and I was all alone,

My son—his foes—had disappear'd, the tragedy was done,

All round I gazed, and 'neath the door I saw a sable flood,

Sluggishly creeping round the floor—Oh! gracious God, 'twas blood.

18.

My boy, my boy!—Oh, had they not debased his mind in youth,

How spotless might have been his soul, his purity, and truth!

They spurn'd him, starv'd him, mock'd and jeer'd—he scorn'd to be a slave,

And so he died the felon's death and fills the felon's grave.

II.

Six massive men in sable suit,

Of mighty bulk, and hanging brows,

Are darkly sitting, foot to foot,

Enjoying a carouse,—

All learned men, and fill'd with knowledge,
 Six Senior Fellows of a College.
 How grave they sit! how wise they look!
 Each portly face is as a book,
 Where ye may read triangle and line,
 Cube root, parallelogram, circle, and sign,
 And a very particular judgment in wine!
 Wise Senior Fellows are they all,
 Steady as clock-work in chapel and hall;
 Six mighty parsons devoted to heaven,
 All looking out for a college living.

Twenty years they have wasted their breath,
 In praying for murder and sudden death,—
 But the jolly incumbents, whose death would de-
 light them,
 Live on, as if merely on purpose to spite them:—
 Twenty years they have all been engaged,
 And their mistresses now have grown “certainly
 aged.”
 Oh! how they wade through the Morning Post,
 In hopes the old Rector has yielded the ghost,
 That he’s broken his neck by a fall from his horse,
 Or gone off in a fit in the second course,

Providentially choaked by the bone of a cod,
 Or some morning fctind "Dead,—by the finger of
 God;"—
 Ah ! Senior Fellowships always give birth
 To "Glory to God and good will upon earth."

III.

The frail Incumbent 's dead at last,
 One Fellow from the board has past ·
 Off to rural shades he hies,
 To view the long expected prize,
 Finds it not *quite* to his mind,
 Talks of taking tithes in kind,
 Lectures with amazing spirit,
 On the small reward of merit ;
 A thousand pounds is surely slim
 Preferment for a man like him ;
 Still he shews his judgment fine,
 In buying all the best of wine,
 Paints the rooms, and builds the beds,
 Grumbles at his fate—and weds.
 His wife soon fancies he prefers
 His college *fellowship* to hers.

Well ;—he 's settled now for life,
 Living, cellar, horse and wife,—
 What is now his fund of knowledge ?
 What the honours of his college ?
 What knows *he* of life's affections ?
 Sweeter far are conic sections.
 What knows *his* pedantic eye
 Of "the beds where poor men lie ?"
 Cast from college haunts at once,
 'Gad ! the learned clerk 's a dunce !
 Wise as Ude in wines and dishes,
 What knows he of poor men's wishes ?
 In solitude and scorn he writhes,
 A Wrangler—only about Tithes !

O not more dark or void the mind of him
 Who, in old days, intomb'd in cloisters dim,
 Pass'd his dull life afar from stirring deeds,
 Lazily mumbling pray'rs, and counting beads,—
 Not more a stranger to this breathing world,
 The man round whom preserving ice-wreaths curl'd ;
 And, while thrice fifty times the fruits and flow'rs
 Burst forth to beautify this earth of ours,

Kept him enshrined, and sent him forth at last,
 Unchanged since first the sleep was o'er him cast,
 And worshipping the idols of his youth,
 Blind to the power that overthrew them—Truth!*

He who with haughty eye and bigot frown
 Contemns whatever smacks not of the gown,
 And sees no wisdom save in high degree,
 Is this the man to teach us charity?
 He who, insensate, shuts his pedant ears
 To all unhallow'd by a thousand years,
 Who hears not, in his pomp of lettered ease,
 The "voices wandering over earth and seas,"
 Speaking strange truths, and filling land and sky,
 With the proud patriot's watch-word—liberty;
 Speaking in tones that brook not of disdain,
 Of tottering oligarchs and their loosened chain,—

* The reader will recollect the story which went the round of the newspapers several years ago, of a traveller named Dodswell, coming to life again, after having been imbedded in an avalanche since the time of Oliver Cromwell.

Who vainly strives,—the same as he began
 To fright the boy—to fright the full grown man,
 Is this the being filled with pomp and pride,
 To point our duties, or our thoughts to guide?
 Well o'er the flock the pensive bard might weep,
 When shepherds were “more silly than their sheep.”*

IV.

There blows a blessed air to-day,
 It seems to fan the heart,
 And fill it with all fancies gay,
 And hither and thither its thoughts to sway,
 Like roses set apart
 In some bright spot of garden ground,
 Breathing perfume and gladness round.
 Beneath some high o'er-shading tree
 The moss shall be a bed for me,

* I heard a worthy of this description declare, that if any book, or writing, or new information whatsoever, were able to modify or change his opinion on any subject, he should despise himself. It is surely nothing but a love of singularity which prevents him from doing so already.

And dreams shall be my architects
To build a world, all—all my own,
Where, free from varying creeds and sects,
All mankind, at one throne,
On one dread name in love shall call,
Through Him who died to save us all !
And every sight that meets the eyes
Shall lift our vision to the skies,
No feud, no fear, no cold, nor dearth—
One family in all the earth !
That earth how fair ! that life how pleasant !
I'd make some changes from the present :
And, first and foremost in the list,
I'd have no bloated pluralist,
No toadying sycophant, to fawn
His uphill progress to the Lawn—
No canting slave, to eat his words
At frown of Harlots or of Lords.
Nay—for I'd make the change complete—
E'en Curates should have bread to eat,
And sometimes have a pound to spend,
To aid the poor man or the friend !—

V.

What ! are the Paupers gather'd still
 To shew their cantatory skill,
 And absolutely wasting time
 In listening to a useless rhyme ?
 How drooping-eyed Tom Perkins sits,
 And o'er his moody brow, by fits,
 The shades of bitter hatred dart,
 All blackening upwards from the heart.

TOM PERKINS'S SONG.

1.

Ah ! well I recollect the time,
 'Twas in the glorious summer prime,
 'Twas in the month of June,
 A soldier's coat I first put on,
 First gloried in a soldier's gun,
 And march'd to gallant tune,—
 Merrily, merrily march'd we, then,
 A thousand brave and happy men.

2.

Happy, and brave, and young, and gay,
 Where'er we went, 'twas holiday ;

And crowds came forth to see ;
 Bright eyes their sweetest glances cast
 On each gay soldier as he past,
 And joyous men were we ;—
 Their pray'rs pursued us to the main—
 We now were on the route to Spain.

3.

A thousand gallant hearts were we,
 As ever pour'd their life-blood free,
 Or cross'd the salt-sea foam
 To battle—as 'twas right we should,—
 To scorn the tempest, fire, and flood,
 And die to save our Home ;
 A very worthy deed, I wis,
 To die for such a home as this !

4.

When victory sat upon our swords,
 How gratitude made knights and lords,
 And towns flamed up in light !
 Wealth, honours, praises, all were shed,
 Like rain, upon each noble head,
 For such a glorious fight—

*We, all the while, who struck the blow,
Had nothing but our wounds to shew.*

5.

We fought in every field of fame,
Like blood-hounds, staunch upon the game ;
 The eagle quail'd at last.
Death, like a mower, o'er us steed,
And victory held the feast of blood,—
 It was a rich repast,—
And then rose up a wild halloo—
'Twas England shouting, Waterloo !

6.

A thousand gallant souls were we,
When first we crossed the rolling sea—
 As buoyant as its waves ;
Nine hundred soldiers nobly slain
Fed the wild crows of France and Spain,
 Or filled their Flemish graves—
Tired, wounded, sick,—a ghastly band—
One hundred sought their native land.

7.

Honours and rich rewards are mine,
 A medal on my breast to shine,
 It plays a gallant part—
 And seems my very heart to goad—
 When scraping dirt from off the road,
 Or yoked in Quarry-cart—
 I, who have toil'd, and fought, and bled,
 Am doom'd to earn inhuman bread!

8.

My pension—for our grateful land
 Pours bounty with unsparing hand,
 And scatters all her hoard,—
 Six pence a-day is all she gives,
 How merrily an old soldier lives—
 Go, ask the Parish board,
 It seizes it the hour 'tis due—
 A glorious fight was Waterloo.*

* An old soldier does not receive the slightest benefit from his pension. Even though he is in work, the parish only pays him as much in addition as will make up full wages. It was surely intended as a reward to him, and not to the farmers.

VI.

Clang ! clang ! goes the village bell again,
 And the Rector, red and hot,
 Has rattled along, without slackening his rein,
 All through the village, and up the church lane.
 At an Osbaldeston trot ;
 Wiping his brow, and panting for breath,
 He's afraid he will scarcely be in at the death.
 Faintly, wearily, tolls the bell ;
 Clang ! clang ! clang ! 'tis a pauper's knell,
 A poor old man, with silver hair,
 Broken by seventy years of care.

The panting steed is tied to the gate,
 And the Rector goes into church, in state ;
 Soon you will see him, in robes of snow,
 Forth from the church's portal go,
 A holy man, devout and sincere,
 And much underpaid with two thousand a-year !

Where winds the river through the green,
 A sombre cavalcade is seen,
 Bearing the coffin, sedate and slow—
 Where are they should attend the show ?

Four old men the coffin bear—
 Mourners and weepers none are there.
 Four old men, with years bent double,
 Bear up the pall, and—**are paid for their trouble.**
 All are dead whom his youth had known—
 The poor passes on to his grave alone !

Up to the churchyard's gate, at length,
 The four old men, with failing strength,
 Have borne their burthen ; lo ! and there
 The Rector stands, with troubled air !

Those tott'ring bearers, fail'd and old,
 Have kept him shivering in the cold,
 (The sun shines bright on all beside,)
 And baulk'd him of his morning ride.

Soon the 'customed psalm is said,
 Soon the hurried verse is read,
 Once again they lift the dead.
 From the church's open door
 The funeral train comes forth once more,
 And, feebly bending, scarce can pass
 Through the tufts of tangled grass.

Gather'd round the grave, we see
Gaping urchins, two or three—
And wither'd dames, in cloak of red,
Silent stand while comes the dead.
But playful boys, with shout and bound,
Gambol on the burial ground ;
Gathering, from the heap'd up mould,
Relics of our nature old,
Bones yet fresh and undecay'd,
And skulls indented with the spade.
In that grave the plain rough board,
With all that it contains, is lower'd ;
Seventy years of want and sin
Sleep that narrow cell within,—
And the earth is shovell'd in !
Jarringly, with accent drear,
The parting knell grates on the ear.
The boys are gone, the bearers fled,
The women in their cloaks of red ;
There's no one 'neath the yew trees cold,
Save the sexton, stamping down the mould.
The Rector awakens the silent street,
With the quick sounds of galloping feet ;

The sky is bright, the flowers are out,
The school is let loose with a joyous shout ;
There 's gladness in each light wind's breath.
Tush !—We have said too much of death !

PART THIRD.

I.

'Tis evening. With a joyous humming
 Home the laden bees are coming ;
 Merrily have they toil'd all day ;
 Merrily through the mild air winging,
 Musical little folks are they—
 So busy at their work and singing.

Braham ne'er cast his voice around
 With such deep melody of sound :
 Thrilling the boxes and shaking the gallery—
 Though fifty guineas a night is his salary.
 Drooping-winged, and tired, they come,
 Bringing their hard-earn'd treasures home ;
 Treasures unshared by a cormorant crowd,
 Treasures untouch'd by the idle and proud,
 Treasures unpurchased by baseness or sorrow,
 Enough for to-day, and a feast for to-morrow.

With spade on shoulder, toil-bespent, . . .
 A workman crosses o'er the style,—
 Within his eye ye read content,
 And happiness in every smile.
 Hark ! is he singing?—No such thing,
 His heart is much too full to sing.
 Is he weary?—thirsty?—cold?
 All day long, since morning's peep,
 He's been ditching in the mould,
 In mud and water ankle deep.
 Home that happy man's returning—
 Doubtless there's a bright fire burning :
 Thirsty from his toil severe—
 Doubtless there's some home-brew'd beer.
 Happy man ! how blest is he !
 How much more happy than the bee !
 A fire?—No wood has he to burn—
 No tankard foams at his return ;
 Off to his pallet let him creep,
 And sink reality in sleep.
 But, e'er to slumber he is past,
 What's the sound that meets him last ?
 Is it children's gentle voices ?
 (To father's ear most blest of noises,)

Children laughing loud and long,
 Or bursting into joyful song?
 Laughing they are *not*—nor singing,
 Yet their voices loud are ringing;
 They have gathered round his bed,
 They have been but scantily fed;—
 They are asking him for bread.
 Oh lullaby, supremely blest!
 What dreams must beautify his rest!

II.

There's a mountain of beef, and a river of ale,
 And a fiddle is sounding all over the vale;
 Oh! what a beautiful vision to see,
 For the man is as hungry as hungry can be;—
 He has cut a huge slice from the mountain's fat side,
 He has dipt a huge bowl in the river's brown tide,
 He has opened his mouth, he has muttered a grace,
 When a crowd rushes in, and he's push'd from his place!
 The mountain's devoured by a grim tax receiver,
 A pot-bellied parson drinks up all the river;
 A gaunt overseer clutches hold of his slice,
 And empties his brown brimming bowl in a trice,—

And, presto ! begone ! for the mountain and stream,
And the fiddle's gay notes, disappear from his dream.

From the cold grass on which he lies,
He wildly struggles to arise,
But a deadly weight is on his chest,—
Backward to the earth he 's prest ;
Thews and sinews start in vain,
Downwards he is borne again ;—
Farmer, parson, 'squire, unite
To crush him with o'erpowering might.
Upon his breast in silent state
They sit, and press him with their weight ;
Down beneath the load he sinks
The greedy earth his sweat updrinks :
Deeper, deeper still he goes,
Prest by such a weight of foes,
Fetters now are o'er him cast,
He 's ground into the earth at last ;
Every nerve is on the strain,
He struggles to be loosed in vain,
Strives to shake off the oppressive crew,
And wakens—is the vision true ?

Such are the dreams that flash their light
 On the tired sleeper's aching sight ;
 Oh, what a luxury to creep
 For comfort to so blest a sleep,
 To wake from joys, like this, ideal,
 And find what you have dreamt of—real ?

III.

Sweet Village,—I can scarce conceive,
 A lovelier scene or balmier eve.
 Softly the fading sun-beams fall
 On each old cottage gable wall,
 And bathe them in so soft a light;
 Mellow'd by distance to the sight,
 And veil them in so pure a ray,
 You scarce believe they're built of clay !
 In Venice, in so calm an hour,
 Romance and music wake their pow'r,
 And melody and gladness free
 Float tenderly o'er land and sea.
 It is the sky, the glorious sky,
 That wakes a light in every eye,
 Bids feelings of delight grow strong,
 And happiness rush forth in song,—

'Tis so with us,—for hark! again
 The paupers wake a livelier strain,
 A strain so gay in *every* word,
 Such as fair Venice never heard.

BILL HARVEY'S SONG.

There's a ship on the ocean, that gallantly rides,
 And she floats like a swan on the murmuring tides,
 Through the breeze of the summer she shoots her light
 form,
 And glides like a falcon through tempest and storm.
 Ride on, thou proud vessel! bound swift o'er the sea!
 No home is there left me, no country save thee!

2.

No home and no country,—off, off let me roam:
 'Tis not in the palace the king finds a home,
 'Tis not the bare wall or the desolate hearth,
 Is a home,—nor our country a cold spot of earth,
 Where food's to be gain'd, and where fields blossom free,
 Oh! *there* shines a home and a country for me!

3.

Sail on, thou gay vessel! Far over the wave
 I'll find me a country, or find me a grave;

Far better to die in the swamp or the wood,
 Than to creep thro' long life on the mendicant's food,—
 A grave or a homestead beneath the green tree!—
 For death or good fortune alike set me free!

4.

The shaded Savannah has pestilent brakes,
 The wood has its tigers, the swamp has its snakes.
 He fears no Savannah who 's toil'd in a drain,
 The snake on the pauper glares fearful in vain;
 From priest, 'squire, and farmer but let me go free,
 The tiger and serpent are welcome to me!

5.

What boots it to us that our country is rich?
 The best of our life-time is spent in a ditch,
 We know she is pow'rful—she tramples us down,
 And plentiful too—though our bread is so brown;
 There 's a land quite as lovely far over the sea,
 For the land that gives food is the fairest to me.

6.

Oh give me the wood where the axe never swung,
 Where man never entered, and voice never rung,

A hut made of logs, and a gun by my side,
 The land for my portion, and Jane for my bride,
 That hut were a palace, a country for me,—
 Dash on, thou proud ship, o'er the wide-rolling sea !

IV.

Who comes so fast on a broken-kneed mare,
 With boots very dusty, and coat very bare,
 Cantering gaily o'er meadow and down?—
 Ha! 'tis our Leech from the neighbouring town.
 Careful and kind to our paupers are we,
 We keep them a Surgeon, and pay him his fee ;
 Why should they grumble? Whene'er they are ill,
 They have all the advantage of medical skill,
 They've the lancet and draft, and the bolus in store,—
 A Duke or a Duchess could scarcely have more.
 Great is our care of the paupers indeed,
 And kind is the Surgeon, tho' poorly he's feed,—
 Six other parishes wait his behest,
 Ours is the largest and pays him the best;
 We have twice three hundred put under his care,
 To claim his attention on foul days or fair :
 He physics and bleeds, and cures fevers and pains,
 And seventeen pounds is the stipend he gains.

The Farmers are certainly kind, to ensure them
 A man at so splendid a stipend to cure them,
 For the Farmer treats science with lofty regard,
 And learning and skill have a fitting reward.

V.

The fast-breathing mare is now standing at ease,
 With the reins on her neck, and her head at her knees,
 The Surgeon has entered, as silent as snow,
 A hut where a woman lies fainting and low:

Gaze ye, gaze ye curiously,
 On that pale and ghastly face,
 On that wildly burning eye,—
 Can ye not retrace
 Features seen long years ago,
 In womanhood's first, holiest glow,
 Shining, as if light from heav'n
 To earth's consummate flow'r was given?
 Gaze ye on,—'tis idle all,
 That face ye never may recall.
 There she lies, in piteous state,
 Friendless, joyless, desolate,
 Reft of pride, of beauty reft,—
 Can this be all that sin has left?

Gaze ye on—I tell you, there
 Lies what once was passing fair,
 Guileless heart, and placid brow,—
 She dies a parish pauper now.
 Boots it little now to tell
 How she liv'd, or how she fell ;
 Poverty—with fatal art—
 Blunts the feeling, sears the heart ;
 Poverty—has more undone,
 Than Wealth or Luxury have won,—
 Poverty—with Want and Pain,
 And Ignorance to form her train.
 She dims the very sense of right,
 Makes Virtue hideous to the sight ;
 Loosens the heart from Shame's controul,
 And blots God's image from the soul.
 Gaze ye still?—that face was rife
 With hope, and loveliness and life ;
 Now the loveliness is gone,
 Faded are those cheeks, and wan,
 But disease has fail'd to tame
 Those eyes,—or filled with wilder flame—
 Strength and hope alike are fled—
 The Parish Surgeon shakes his head.—

Little can his stipend yield,
 That dying one from pang to shield ;
 There she lies in racking pain,
 All his blessed art his vain—
 The Surgeon shakes his head again !
 Rest thee, rest thee, fated one !
 Off to another parish he's gone—
 For with seventeen pounds, and his patients so many,
 Two shaks is all he can waste upon any.

VI.

Prithee, what is Charity ?
 Is she one with holy eye,
 Weeping near to Sorrow's bed,
 Soothing sinner's hour of dread,
 Fearing not that stain may light
 On her robe of spotless white,
 Though she treads the darkest scene,
 Where Misery and Sin have been ?
 She who points to Heav'n above,
 She whose heart is filled with love,
 She who feels no prudish fear
 When the child of shame draws near ;

She who bids her ~~not~~ despair,
 For God will hear repenting pray'r ;
 She who does her alms unknown,
 She who bends at Mercy's throne,
 Hidden all from human eye,
 Trust me,—this is Charity.

But a little French Milliner, fill'd with grimace,
 Takes Charity's name and stands forth in her place,
 Flaunting abroad in a furbelow'd gown
 She 's the wonder and pride and the belle of the town ;—
 O how she sighs at a story of woe !
 A sigh's so becoming to bosom of snow—
 Oh ! how she begs, looking pretty the while,
 Till hearts, and subscriptions, are gain'd by her smile ;
 She sits in her parlour, surrounded by beaux,
 And looks *so* divine making poor people's clothes,
 And fans of goose-feathers, and shoes made of scraps,
 And fire-screens and needle-books, babies and caps,—
 She 's so tender and busy,—she levies a war
 'Gainst the gentlemen's hearts at a Fancy Bazaar.
 Oh ! Charity flaunts it in feather and plume,
 And smiles like an angel—in rouge and perfume.

She flirts at her booth---she 's the gayest of belles,
 And hardly she bargains, and dearly she sells;
 And customers wonder, that lady so free,
 So kind to the poor, and so tender should be;
 A truce to your wonder---she heeds not the poor---
 If once she is married she 's tender no more.
 Ah, me ! that such labour, such feeling and care,
 Should all be bestow'd upon Vanity Fair,---
 And deeper the error and darker the shame
 That this is transacted in Charity's name !

VII.

Day fades. Oh, beautiful the scene
 And softening to the heart,
 When, in the place where glare has been,
 A dimness---with a light serene---
 Obscures the brighter part,
 And wraps the mountain and the dale
 Within a rich translucent veil.

I see it yet---our Village fair---
 It seems a peaceful nest,

Sheltered from every blustering air,
I would it were from sin and care !

A paradise of rest—
Where misery's wing should never sweep
To break the calmness of its sleep.

But, harken!—From the Poor-House still
A boding song, of grief and ill,
Sounds cheerlessly,—it is their last;
Forth from yon chamber they have past,
And they have gather'd round a bed
Where rests the body of the dead—
They gaze upon the corpse that lies
With hueless cheek and closed eyes.
She was old—and pass'd away,—
She had nought to tempt her stay;
Long and silently they look
On that blank page of nature's book—
Nothing may their eyes read there,
Hope, or gladness, or despair;
With tearless eye and 'bated breath,
Thus they chaunt the dirge of death.

PAUPERS' SONG.

1.

Death has no terrors when we're tired of life;
 We see before us one who's snapt the chain,—
 Her eye no longer turns on scenes of strife,
 Her ear no longer hears the shrieks of pain;—
 She's changed her prison for the realms of day;
 Why should we sorrow o'er her senseless clay?

2.

In noisome city and the breathless lane,
 The soul itself succumbs to the restraint;
 Grief seems so native, that we welcome pain
 And toil through life, nor utter one complaint.
 That dull, cold city, and its darksome holes,
 Seem all congenial to our prostrate souls.

3.

But in the gladsome dells and summer fields,
 Sorrow seems alien to so blest a scene.—
 Oh ! hard to starve 'mid all that nature yields;
 And toil and weep 'mid pastures fresh and green;—
 She who lies here shall never toil nor weep;
 Why should we sorrow o'er so kind a sleep?

Where are her children? are her daughters flown?
 Her boys—why come they not, their grief to prove?
 Alas! the pauper lives—and dies—alone,
 And penury receives no filial love.
 Love, care, attention, all that wealth attends,
 The poor may know not—paupers have no friends.

We mourn her not,—yet, o'er her awful dust,
 Pour we the curse on those whose heartless sway
 Doom'd her to pain.—Yet, God above is just;—
 Vengeance is his—and richly he'll repay!
 Each tear down trampled sorrow's cheek that rolls
 Shall turn to fire, and scorch their tyrant souls!

Sleep on. Thou hadst no friends, though thou wert
 kind,—
 Thou hadst no joys—although thy heart was pure—
 Thou hadst no hopes—though stedfast was thy mind—
 Thou hadst no comfort—though thy trust was sure;
 Sleep on. With sorrow thou'rt no more at strife;
 Death has no terrors when we're tired of life.

VIII.

How peacefully our village lies
 In this calm midnight hour;
 Thus sleeping, 'neath the moonlight skies,
 And girt with silent power,
 The power to waken thoughts of harm,
 Which all its beauty fails to charm.
 Why, in a scene so fair as this,
 Should sadness mingle with our bliss ?
 And, as the placid moonbeam falls
 On these low dwellings' silver'd walls ;
 And tenderly the midnight air
 Breathes softly round me like a prayer,
 Why should one wandering thought intrude
 Of misery, or of ought save good ?
 I know not,—yet while here I keep
 My watch o'er its unconscious sleep,
 That Village fills my heart with fears
 And dims my eye with bitter tears ;
 How few of all whose childhood stray'd
 In its green copse or winding glade
 Trace upward Memory's iron chain
 To childhood, save by links of pain !

How few who do not curse the spot
That binds them to a servile lot,
And breaks hope's pitcher e'er the tide
Of courage or of youth be dried !
What must the mother's hand have done,
That steels the bosom of her son,—
Bids gloomy rage and hatred swell
Where filial reverence should dwell ?
She spurns him from his earliest youth,
She bars him from the light of truth,
In darkness' cell confines him deep,
Gives prejudice the keys to keep ;
Untaught—she asks him wise to be—
In chains—she bids him to be free—
She scorns his prayer, and mocks his moan,
He asks for bread, and he receives a stone !

THE END.

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